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ABSTRACT

Ways to increase the use of educational program evaluation findings through the meaningful involvement of potential users (teachers and administrators) are discussed. Involvement, as defined in this paper, is generally limited to the opportunity for input to the initial evaluation design and the chance to review the design and implementation plans prior to the evaluation. Therefore, the role of staff, teachers, and administrators is to provide direction for the study. For effective, meaningful involvement, the following guidelines should be followed: (1) Involve only individuals who can contribute something or have a stake in the program. (2) Screen out biased input. (3) Use the solicited information. (4) Involve teachers and administrators in the program planning and implementation, but do not hold them responsible for the evaluation. (5) Do not unnecessarily inconvenience or overburden the participants. (6) Keep the evaluation planning process open. (7) Keep the audience informed of current progress. The evaluation of the Orton-Gillingham Reading Disabilities Program used in Lincoln, Nebraska is decribed in detail. Author/HV)

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AN INVOLVEMENT APPROACH TO THE EVALUATION OF LOCAL DISTRICT PROGRAMS

by

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The apparent nonuse of evaluation findings is one of the most vexing problems associated with the practice of evaluation in the public school setting. Even in districts with active evaluation sections it is difficult to establish a direct correspondence between evaluation results and educational decisions. There are a number of possible explanations why this relationship is difficult to document. First of all, educational decision makers are, of necessity, sensitive to political factors which can and often do take precedence over educational considerations. A second possible explanation is the poor scientific quality of the majority of evaluations. Time considerations are also a possible explanation; it is not unusual for a report not to be published until after the decision it was intending to serve has already been made.

There could still be another even more basic explanation for nonuse of evaluation results; that is, evaluators do not devote enough time and effort trying to build in potential audiences a readiness for the evaluation results. Examples of possible readiness activities include activities to a) insure that the evaluation design focuses on the primary concerns of potential users, b) insure that the evaluation is feasible from a practical standpoint, and c) help develop in potential users an understanding of the overall evaluation effort.

This paper focuses on the problem of trying to increase the use of evaluation findings through the meaningful involvement of potential

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users in the evaluation process. The paper is divided into three sections. The first describes a rationale for the involvement of potential users in the evaluation effort. The second summarizes a set of principles for involvement, and the third discusses an example of how the principles are implemented in the Lincoln Public Schools.

The Rationale Behind the Involvement Approach

The basic assumption of the involvement approach to evaluation is that the most satisfactory evaluation (most useful, most creditable, etc.) is one in which a large number of people have had input. Initial involvement of program and/or administrative staff in the study eliminates many of the problems in disseminating the results and increases the creditability of the study. More importantly, familiarity with the evaluation should increase understanding of the effort and increase receptiveness to the results.

Involvement, as defined in this paper, is generally limited to the opportunity for input to the initial evaluation design and the chance to review the design and plans to implement the design prior to implementation of the plans. Therefore, the role of staff, teachers, administrators, etc., is to provide direction for the study. They keep the evaluation study on target and manageable.

At this point it may be useful to differentiate between teachers and administrators in terms of use made of evaluation results. Few people will argue that administrators are <u>not</u> users of evaluation information. After all, administrators are responsible for determining whether or not a program should be continued, be terminated, or be modified. They can support programs or withdraw support.

The uses made by teachers are more subtle but no less important. Teachers maintain ultimate responsibility for implementing programs at the student level. They are also the most skeptical audience when it comes to evaluation. If the evaluation runs counter to their own perceptions they are apt to ignore the evaluation results.* After all, they are in the classroom, they know what is happening. At least more so than an evaluator who only infrequently even visits school buildings. Yet "worth" of a program cannot be adequately defined by one teacher's satisfaction with a particular class or child. It encompases a number of dimensions, i.e., outcomes, attitudes and experiences in a number of classrooms and the experiences of a number of teachers. Teachers have to be convinced, i.e., presented believeable, creditable information, if they are expected to expand and use information beyond their own experiences. Involvement in planning the evaluation facilitates acceptance of the results.

The involvement of staff in actual evaluation studies is also likely to be the most effective staff development activity possible to develop an understanding of evaluation. Such involvement effectively teachers the district philosophy underlying evaluation and emphasizes appropriate and inappropriate uses of evaluation.

The problem becomes one of maximizing teacher and administrator involvement in the evaluation effort without overburdening them with busywork or confusing them with pedantic details. Input into the

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*The situation is similar in instances when schools are adopting programs. Teachers need to be convinced that a new program is more desirable or better than an old program before they can be expected to fully support the program.

development of the evaluation design, the data collection plan and the interpretation of the results are ways in which both teachers and administrators can be meaningfully involved in the evaluation effort. It is inefficient to try to involve staff in other phases of the evaluation, i.e., report writing, analyses, etc.

Principles

Involvement will not, however, be effective if misdirected, misunderstood, or mismanaged. It has to be meaningful. Therefore, the following guidelines need to be followed:

1. Involve only individuals who have something to contribute to or have a stake in the program. The evaluator should play the role of the disinterested, impartial judge. Involvement of other disinterested parties unduly complicates the issues. This principle is based largely on the assumption that no one is completely or truly disinterested, and it is more difficult to determine what biases the "disinterested" third party participants have. Implicit in this assumption is the further assumption that the evaluator knows and understands his own biases and has the integrity to compensate for them. Although this principle is an important one, it is not very restrictive. "Interest in" can be liberally interpreted.

2. Input should not be intentionally biasing. This principle is related to the overriding assumption that an evaluation should be fair and not subject to intentional bias. The implication of this principle is that the evaluator must act as a judge and screen out "input" that is intended to make the program or practices being evaluated look either good or look bad. Common examples of biasing input frequently occur in

the selection of objectives. Advocates want objectives stated in a way so that the program is nearly certain of attaining them. Detractors on the other hand want criterion levels that are so high that they are practically impossible to achieve. Another example of biasing input, common to both advocates and distractors alike, is the misidentification of project participants, i.e., the target group is either too restrictively or too widely defined.

3. Input should not be solicited unless it will or at least can be used. In other words input should be solicited prior to making decisions or finalizing evaluation plans. Nothing can destroy an evaluator's* creditability faster than asking for advice after it is too late to use that advice.

4. Involvement of teachers and administrators in the planning and implementing of the evaluation does not make them responsible for the evaluation. Overall responsibility for the evaluation effort remains with the evaluator.

5. The process of providing input should not unnecessarily inconvenience or overburden participants.

6. Input should be overt not covert. The director of the program being evaluatored and/or a representative of the staff implementing the program should be invited to all meetings at which the evaluation is being discussed and should have the opportunity to react to all suggestions. The more open the evaluation planning process, the more likely the resulting design is to be effective.

7. The primary target audiences of the evaluation should be kept

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*Evaluator as the term is used here refers to the individual initially assigned responsibility for the evaluation regardless of his or her professional training.

formed on the progress being made. Progress reports should not be lengthy, but should emphasize any change made in the procedure.

A Local Approach to Involvement

For planning purposes the evaluation process can be thought of as a five step cycle. The five step model is used because it is helpful in identifying points at which input from teachers and administrators is useful and because it pareallels the way evaluation is conceptualized in the Lincoln (NE) Public Schools.

Step 1. Development of a Work Statement. Administrators are most appropriately involved in the development of the work statement. The program staff should also participate in the development of the work statement. The work statement is the initial delimiter of the study. The fact that a work statement was developed indicates that an administrator or a group with program or policy responsibility feels that a decision needs to be made and that not enough or conflicting information is available to make the decision. The work statement used in Lincoln a) identifies the questions to be answered, b) records one person's (or one group's) interpretation of the objectives or goals, and c) provides a general statement describing the background of the program.

Initially the work statement was completed by the individual or group requesting the evaluator, however, the evaluator and the individual requesting the study now share responsibility for developing the work statement. This arrangement is more efficient in that the requesting individual(s) have the understanding of the program or practices to be evaluated but not the understanding of the evaluation needed to get the study started. The evaluator on the other hand, knows what is needed but does not have the necessary understanding of the program.

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*Minutes of all feedback sessions should be published and distributed to participants.

Step 2. Development of an Evaluation Plan. The evaluation plan is primarily the responsibility of the evaluator. Minimally the evaluation plan should include the program objectives or questions which the evaluation study is designed to answer, the data to be collected (including test names and drafts of instruments), and the timelines established for data collection and reporting. The evaluation plan should be based upon the work statement and the intent of the program as understood by the evaluator. A number of individuals, administrators, program staff, and teachers should be involved in clarifying the intent of the program.

There are a number of considerations that need to be taken into account in developing an evaluation plan. Among them are:

1. The distribution of the workload associated with the evaluation If teachers, students or administrators are to be involved and, I can't imagine an evaluation being conducted without involving some representatives of one or more of these groups, then care should be taken to avoid overloading or unnecessarily inconveniencing any individual or group of individuals. The workload should be distributed as evenly as possible.

2. Maximum use should be made of data already available, i.e., the district standardized testing program, a district or regional assessment program, or data collection activities associated with the program or practices being evaluated.

3. The timeline developed should be realistic. Reports should not be promised unless they can be produced.

Step 3. Review of the Evaluation Plan. The review of the evaluation plan is a critical step that differentiates the involvement model from a totally independent third party model. Prior to the implementation

plan all groups who have an active interest in the program or practices being evaluated (or representatives of the group) should be allowed to review and react to the plan. Groups typically represented include, administration, program staff, teachers and parent or advisory committees.

The scope of the review should be limited to (or at least focus on) (1) The completeness of the plan. Are any key variables deleted from the study and if so, why? Often key variables have to be deleted from consideration if they are not measurable or if adequate finances and personnel are not available, (2) The fairness of the plan. Will the information collected and the questions to be answered present an unbiased portrayal of the program?, (3) The reasonableness of the timelines. Can the timelines be met? Are they realistic and will the reports be ready when needed, or are there conflicts?, (4) Can the plan be implemented? Is the plan itself reasonable or is it so complex and time consuming that teachers and staff at the building level can not or will not carry it out?, (5) Is the plan understandable? Are the instructions clear enough so that the plan can be carried out?

Step 4. Implementation of the Plan. The procedures to be followed and the division of responsibility in implementing the evaluation plan are determined, in large part, by the policies* and practices of the local district. In Lincoln, Nebraska, the evaluation unit is responsible for the evaluation design and for producing the technical materials and

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*Policy 6102. Evaluation: Definition of Responsibilities. In the evaluation of a project or program, the evaluation team shall be primarily responsible for designing the evaluation and providing the technical support necessary to implement the designs and getting the data collected and reporting the results of the evaluation to the program or project director. The director shall be responsible for implementing the design at the building, classroom or student level. This division of responsibilities can be altered by a written agreement between the director of the program or project and the service unit.

plans necessary to implement the design. Actual data collection is the responsibility of the staff of the program being evaluated. This division of responsibility also dictates the criterion used in Step 3, Review of Plan. In a highly centralized organization the criteria of clarity and ease of implementation would be less critical.

Step 5. Reporting the Results. The final step in the evaluation process is the reporting of the results. The same general guidelines used in determining who should review the evaluation plan also apply to the reporting of results. A report should be directed towards individual or groups who have an active interest or stake in the programs. The most effective type of report is an oral report supplemented with a short written handout. Oral reports are flexible and can be tailored to the needs and interests of the group. Question and answer periods are also extremely useful.

The first two sections of this paper have briefly described an operational approach to evaluation. The third section will describe how the involvement approach was used to evaluate a reading disabilities program.

The description will begin with an overview of the program and how the district was organized to implement the program. The overview will be followed by a description of the evaluation process organized around the first four steps in evaluation. The description will conclude with a brief discussion of the results and reporting (Step 5) and a summarization of the cost of conducting the evaluation.

An Example of Staff Involvement in the Evaluation of the Lincoln Orton-Gillingham Program

The Orton-Gillingham program is a sequential, multi-sensory phonetic method for teaching reading, writing and spelling skills. In Lincoln the basic Orton-Gillingham method has been supplemented by the uses of Linquistic readers coded to the sounds taught in the program. Stress is placed on direct teaching, over learning and the application of sounds to reading and writing.

The Orton-Gillingham approach was introduced to Lincoln in the Fall, 1970. At that time the program was sponsored by Title I. In 1971 it became the official Lincoln Title I program. It has continued to be used in most Title I schools, although the schools are now free to develop alternative Title I programs.

The Orton-Gillingham program was initially diffused to non-Title I schools through the Lincoln Staff Development Program. Training was made available to teachers in all Lincoln schools. The program was not, however, officially sponsored as a district program until Fall 1973.

In the Spring of 1973 a group of interested parents and educators became active in lobbying for making the program available in all schools. The group noted the success teachers had had using the program with students with specific reading disabilities. The Orton-Gillingham method with its emphasis on the kinesthetic, tactile and auditory senses in addition to visual stimulus and emphasis on over learning seemed particularily appropriate for students with special problems.

An Advisory Committee was formed to develop a plan for implementing a program for students with reading disabilities. The committee recommended implementation of the Orton-Gillingham program in all schools. The Lincoln

Board of Education subsequently allocated $200,000 for staff and materials to establish a district wide Orton-Gillingham program for students with reading disabilities.

Responsibility for implementing the district wide Orton-Gillingham program was given to Dr. Betty Dillon, Director of Staff Development. The program consisted of: (1) making training and materials available to all schools, (2) providing additional staff in each school so that instruction in Orton-Gillingham was available for reading disability students. Goldie Quinn, who had established the Orton-Gillingham program in Title I, was transferred to the Office of Staff Development and became responsible for training teachers in the Orton-Gillingham procedures. She was also responsible for supporting teachers in the school through additional training and consulting services.

Evaluation of the Orton-Gillingham Program

The evaluation of the Orton-Gillingham Reading Disabilities Program was requested by Dr. Ron Brandt, Associate Superintendent of Schools. In September of 1973 he submitted a plan for evaluation. A copy of this plan is included in the Appendix 1. The plan included the following headings: (a) Situation, (b) Evaluation Objectives, (c) Questions to be Answered, (d) Events to Date and Projection of Future Events, and (e) Information Sources. The plan submitted by Dr. Brandt* was really the work statement for the Orton-Gillingham evaluation. It was not an evaluation plan per se. It served to (1) initiate the evaluation and (2) delimit the scope of the

*The ideas developed by Dr. Brandt in this plan provided both the format of and the rationale for the work statement.

evaluation by listing the program objectives, identifying the questions to be answered and clarifying the timelines to be met.

Up until the time the evaluation plan was published the goals and objectives of the Orton-Gillingham program for students with learning disabilities had not been written down. The program had been used with Title I students, however, the majority of eligible Title I students were not learning disabilities students. Therefore, the objectives listed in the work statement were the first written statements of the objectives of the Orton-Gillingham Program with reading disability students.

The second step in the evaluation process was the development of an evaluation design and an "evaluators" evaluation plan. Prior to developing the plan, a number of key individuals in the program were interviewed. These include Goldie Quinn, Reading Specialist in the Office of Staff Development, Dr. Betty Dillon, Director of Staff Development for the Lincoln Public Schools, Dr. Ron Brandt, Associate Superintendent for Instruction, and members of the Council on Reading Disabilities, the advisory group organized the previous Spring.

The development of the plan was the single most time consuming step. Tasks completed during this period included (1) reaching consensus among interested parties as to the program objectives and evaluation questions, (2) developing instruments and procedures to assess progress towards objectives that all participants felt were fair and (3) formulating timelines for administrating the instruments acceptable to administration, staff and, of course, evaluators.

The evaluation plan was finally completed in December*. A copy of the plan is found in the Appendix 2.

The original three objectives were:

1. Make the program available
2. Improve reading achievement
3. Teach phonic skills

In the plan the number of objectives was expanded to nine. The nine objectives included two implementation objectives, five student achievement objectives and two "support" objectives. These objectives were:

Objective 1.1 -- By March, 1974, an Orton-Gillingham Reading Disabilities Program will be available at each attendance center in the Lincoln Public Schools system.

Objective 1.2 -- By March, 1974, 75% of the attendance centers implementing the Orton-Gillingham Reading Disability program will achieve a rating of at least adequate on all eight of the critical program criteria.

Objective 2.1 -- By March, 1974, 80% of the reading disability students in the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program will have been identified by their Orton-Gillingham teachers as making satisfactory progress in the program.

Objective 2.2 -- By May, 1974, 80% of the reading disability students in the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program will have made gains of 10% or greater in the skills they have received instruction on as measured by the Gallistel-Ellis Linguistic Reading and Spelling Test.

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*Much of the delay was due to completion of Federal Evaluation Projects with more strigent timelines.

Objective 2.3 -- Seventy-five percent of the reading disability students in the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program will score higher on the September 1974 administration of the standardized reading achievement test appropriate to their year in school (grade level) than was predicted based on previous scores on standardized reading achievement tests.

Objective 2.4 -- By May 1, 1974, 50% of the reading disability students in the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program will be identified by their Orton-Gillingham reading teacher as being able to return to the regular reading curriculum by September 1, 1975.

Objective 2.5 -- By May, 1974, classroom teachers in the Lincoln Elementary Schools in which the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program has been adequately implemented will indicate they are satisfied with the progress made in reading by 50% of the reading disability students who participated in the Orton-Gillingham Program for 20 or more weeks.

Objective 3.1 -- By May, 1974, 80% of the classroom teachers in the Lincoln Elementary Schools in which the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program has been adequately implemented will rate the program as effective and support its continuation.

Objective 3.2 -- By May, 1974, 80% of the parents of students identified as reading disability students who attend schools in which the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program has been adequately implemented and who participated in the Orton-Gillingham Program for 20 or more weeks will indicate they are satisfied with the progress made by the student in reading and support continuation of the Orton-Gillingham Program.

The implementation objectives expanded the original idea that the program should simply be made available in all the schools. The implementation objectives required that the program be available in all schools

and that three-fourths of the schools have programs that were rated at least adequate on all eight of the critical program criteria. The implementation criteria were developed in cooperation with Goldie Quinn who was responsible for training the Orton-Gillingham teachers in the District. An implementation monitoring procedure was developed in which Ms. Quinn reviewed the Orton-Gillingham program at each school and rated it on the eight criteria.

The two original achievement variables, (1) improve reading achievement and (2) teach skills, were expanded to five measures of achievement. The five objectives included: (1) progress on standardized achievement tests, (2) progress on the Gallistel-Ellis Linguistic Reading and Spelling Test, (3) classroom teachers satisfaction with the reading progress of participants, (4) and (5) ratings of the Orton-Gillingham teachers satisfaction with the reading progress of participants at two different times. The use of multiple criteria for achievment was necessary because we were unable to reach concensus on any single criterion.

The information collected to monitor progress on the objectives fulfilled all the information requirements outlined in the original work statement.

During the initial interview, staff indicated that they were concerned or felt uneasy about other aspects of the program. For example one concern shared by Dr. Brandt, Dr. Dillon and Ms. Quinn was the number and percentage of non-learning disabilities students. The program was designed for and represented a response to the needs of students with learning disabilities. Other non-reading disabilties students were "officially" misplaced although evidence from past Title I evaluations indicated that the Orton-Gillingham program was effective with children

with other types of learning problems. The individuals interviewed were also interested in information on how successful participants differed from students that were not successful in the Orton-Gillingham program.

The experience with the Orton-Gillingham program in previous Title I evaluations suggested another question that needed to be investigated. Results of the earlier evaluations (with primarily non-learning disabilities students) indicated that students progressed on the three different kinds of achievement measures: standardized reading tests, the Gallistel-Ellis Phonetic Test and the Gray Oral Reading Test. The correlations between these three types of measures were, however, low. Therefore, although gains were being made on all three measures, the gains were not consistent across measures. The students making the largest gain on one measure (standardized test score) were not necessarily the students making the largest gains of the other measures.

Another important element of information not requested by the work statement involved the efficiency of the qualification procedures. Any one or more of a large number of screening instruments or procedures could be used to place students in the program.

An information collection plan to answer these supplemental questions was also included in the evaluation plan. The information collection plan was organized around five research questions.

In addition to the brief and simplified description of the evaluation objectives and the research questions the evaluation plan also included a data collection plan and the instruments necessary to implement the plan. The data collection plan and a list of instruments are presented in Appendices 3 and 4. The Data Collection Plan identified the objective or research question, the instrument or procedure to be used to collect information,

the subjects on which data is to be collected, the respondents (who actually completed the instruments), who administered the instrument (if appropriate) and the month the data was to be collected.

There are several very important features of the evaluation plan that so far have not been discussed. The first involves the selection of instruments used. Maximum use was made of instruments already being administered. For example, the standardized test scores used were administered as part of the district standardized testing program. Similarly the Gallistel-Ellis results used to chart progress in mastering phonetic skills were normally administered as part of the Orton-Gillingham program. Since the tests were already being administered no additional student time was required.

The second feature is the sampling plan used. Earlier we discussed the principle of distributing the workload. The student sampling plan used in the Orton-Gillingham evaluation assured that the work associated with the evaluation effort was evenly distributed. The sampling procedures involved:

> First identifying all students in the district that were appropriately identified as learning disability students. The entry information and qualifying information for each student in the program was reviewed by Ms. Goldie Quinn, the Orton-Gillingham Program Specialist*. The scope of the evaluation was limited only to students identified as learning

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*The principle of distribution of workload does not necessarily apply to central program staff or evaluation. It primarily protects students and teachers.

disability students. It was not designed to reflect (one way or the other) on other categories of students, i.e., low ability, emotionally disturbed, etc. Once all learning disability students were identified by the teacher, a stratified random sample of Orton-Gillingham students was selected. The sample was stratified in that exactly five students were selected from each Orton-Gillingham teacher. This sampling procedure, while violating some of the principles of sampling (since the number of learning disability students varied considerably from school to school) insured that no teacher filled out forms on more than five students. Conversely, all teachers filled out forms on five students.*

The sampling procedure also had implications for implementation. Since no one teacher had a disappropriate number of students, differences in implementation, beyond the gross measures used to document existance of an adequate program, was not a factor.**

Review of the Plan

In practice Step 2, Development of the Evaluation Plan and Step 3, Review of the Evaluation Plan overlap. Key program staff and administrators typically participate in the development of the plan. This was the case in the Orton-Gillingham evaluation. Goldie Quinn of the Staff Development Office and Ron Brandt both were active participants in the development of

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*The Orton-Gillingham teachers had to complete four instruments on each student in the sample over a relatively short time frame.

**Schools that did not have adequate Orton-Gillingham programs were eliminated from future consideration in the evaluation.

the plan. Therefore, the plan distributed for final review had already been approved by othe the Office of Staff Development and the Office of Instruction.

The evaluation plan was formally presented for review to three groups: the Superintendent's Cabinet, Principals Council and Council on Learning Disabilities. In addition the Orton-Gillingham teachers in the schools were called together and the evaluation plan was explained to them. Several changes in the evaluation plans were suggested by the reviewers and were subsequently made. None of the objectives or research questions, however, had to be changed. The most significant changes were made in the instruments attached to the plan and on the timeline included in the plan.

The review procedures served two purposes. First, it allowed interested parties to have input into the plan and second, it afforded the evaluators the opportunity to explain the plan to the potential users of the results and to the individuals who would be implementing the plan.

Again, it should be emphasized that the review centered on (1) The focus of the plan, i.e., Were the questions being asked and hopefully answered, The most crucial ones, (2) Were the instruments used, The most appropriate ones, and were the formats convenient, and (3) Were the timelines realistic.

The three points were systematically presented and discussed in each review session. The sessions usually began with a formal presentation of the evaluation objectives and the research questions. The presentations included the type of information to be made available in the final report. The participants were then asked to judge whether or

not all the information they needed or wanted was included in the plan. Typically the individuals in each group wanted information that was not included in the plan.

In every instance, however, suggestions they made had been discussed with Office of Staff Development or with the Office of Instruction, and a decision made not to collect the additional information. Generally there were good reasons supporting the decision, cost of collecting the information, inability to do anything with the information even if it was collected, etc.

The instruments and timelines were also presented and discussed. As expected, the Orton-Gillingham teachers were the most active reviewers of these aspects of the plan. As a result of teacher input, several changes were made in the instruments and the timeline was completely revised and subsequently republished.

One serious mistake was made during the review process. The mistake was failure to develop the directions for the ad hoc instruments in time so they could be included in the review. The directions and administration procedures were developed after the instruments were approved by all reviewing groups.

There were a number of other aspects of the evaluation plan that were not formally included in the review. For example, none of the statistical analyses were reviewed. These were considered to be the evaluator's perrogative. The sampling plan was presented but not reviewed. This also was considered to be the evaluator's perrogative. Presentation of the sampling plan was, however, necessary to explain to teachers why

information was being collected on some students and not others*, and to insure them that they were not doing any more work than anyone else.

Implementation of the Evaluation Plan

The implementation of the evaluation plan followed the timelines summarized in the revised Data Collection Plan, dated January 9, 1974. A copy of the plan is presented in Appendix 3.

In January Goldie Quinn visited each school. The purpose of the visits were: (1) to finalize the implementation ratings and (2) to review the data used to select the participants for the Orton-Gillingham program.

The data collection efforts scheduled for March were not completed until April and the May data collection efforts were not completed until the end of the school year. The timing of the May data collection effort made it impossible to adequately follow-up on data collection forms that were either not returned or were incorrectly completed. Time should have been allowed for follow-up activities in the original schedule.

The most interesting aspect of the implementation effort are the relationships between the evaluation office, the staff development office, and the Orton-Gillingham teacher in the building. The evaluation office was initially responsible for selecting the student sample, developing the instruments and developing the administrative procedures and directions for the instruments. The Office of Staff Development was responsible for completing the implementation rating sheets, reviewing the screening of participants to identify the reading disability students**, reproducing and

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*Typical complaint was "Why did you pick Johnny who is not progressing very fast and not Jimmy who is my best student?"

**The sampling of participants was randomly drawn by school from the pool of all reading disability students.

distributing the instruments, initial screening of the returned instruments to insure that they are properly completed, and follow-up activities to retrieve missing data.

Once the data was collected the evaluation office was responsible for processing the data, analyzing the results and writing the reports.

Reporting the Results

Earlier it was pointed out that in actual practice the Step 2, Development of the Plan and Step 3, Review of the Plan of the evaluation process overlapped. Similarily Step 4, Implementation and Step 5, Reporting overlap. The Data Collection Plan submitted in December had listed November as the reporting date. The November date was necessitated if the Lincoln Public Schools Testing Program was to be used and a special testing avoided. Standardized test scores were normally administered only in the Fall. Therefore, standardized test data for program participants was not available until late October.

As a result of input from the nearly all parties involved, the reporting cycle was moved up. Interim reports were made to the Council of Reading Disabilities as information became available. Achievement data was not collected in time to be included in the reports listed below. The reporting cycle is summarized in Table 1.

TABLE 1

List of Groups Reported to by Date of Report

Date	Group
April 22, 1974	Council on Reading Diabilities
May 10, 1974	Council on Reading Disabilities
August 26, 1974	Elementary Orton-Gillingham Teachers
August 26, 1974	Secondary Orton-Gillingham Teachers
September, 1974	Superintendents Cabinet
September 24, 1974	School Board
September 27, 1974	Council on Reading Disabilities
October 3, 1974	Council on Instruction
November 1, 1974	Consultants Council

The reports listed above were oral reports. Oral reports have the advantage of being easily tailored to the specific interests of the particular audiences. The most detailed reports were presented to the Orton-Gillingham teachers and the Council of Reading Disabilities. The reports to teachers were so detailed that separate reports were made to elementary and secondary students. The oral reports were, in every case, supplemented with visual displays (graphics and tables) to simplify the material, and handouts. Time was also allowed for questions from the audiences. This allowed the evaluators to follow-up on aspects of the evaluations that were of interest to that particular audience.

In addition to oral reports, two written reports were published. The first was a short, five page, report organized around the formally stated objectives. The second was a one page report summarizing the highlights of the evaluation. The second report was written for the Board of Education. Copies of both reports can be found in Appendices 5 and 6. Although it probably would have been desired to publish a detailed report, none was written. There was not an immediate need for such a report and the cost of producing the report seemed to outweigh even the long term advantages.

Cost of Producing

The evaluation effort described in this report is a rather modest one compared to some of the Federal evaluation being conducted in the district. It involved one evaluator for a total of 116 hours from Summer 1973 to late Fall 1974. The estimated cost of the study to the

evaluation office was approximately $1200.* The entire effort was scheduled around the more pressing Federal evaluations. The evaluation did however, meet local needs and contribute to the further development of the Orton-Gillingham Program.

*The estimated cost does not include time and costs incurred by Office of Staff Development, Office of the Associate Superintendent for Instruction and teachers.

APPENDICES

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Appendix 1
Work Statement for Orton-Gillingham Evaluation.
September 12, 1973

LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Instructional Services

PLAN FOR EVALUATION

Project Reading Disability

Funding Source Local Budget

Project Director Ron Brandt

A. Situation (background information, circumstances which led to establishment of the project, purpose of the evaluation)

This is a special project funded entirely with local funds to assure availability of the Orton-Gillingham program to students with reading disabilities in all schools. Funding was approved by the Lincoln Board of Education in July, 1973. Some Title I students will continue to be taught by Orton-Gillingham methods, so the evaluation must be coordinated with the evaluation of the Title I program.

B. Evaluation Objectives (objectives which require data collection as part of the evaluation process):

1. Make the program available.
By September 1974 the Orton-Gillingham program will be available in all Lincoln Schools.

2. Improve reading achievement.
By October 1974 75% of fourth year (third grade) students who have been in the program six months or longer will score at least one stanine higher than they did a year earlier on the standardized test given to all students.

3. Teach phonic skills.
By May of 1974 90% of the students placed in the program will show evidence of satisfactory progress in learning the basic phonic skills. At least 5% will have completed the program and have been returned to the regular curriculum. By May of 1975, at least 50% of those identified in the fall of 1973 will have completed the program and have been returned to the regular curriculum.

(These are tentative objectives subject to further refine ment as a more detailed plan of evaluation is developed.)

C. Questions to be Answered:

1. In which schools is an adequate Orton-Gillingham program currently offered?

2. Do records show names of students identified for the program and their academic standing ?

3. What has been the progress of students identified for the program? (If possible, distinguish between students considered genuine learning disability cases and students whose lack of achievement is thought to be caused primarily by low mental ability, emotional disturbance, or other factors, but who are assigned to the program anyway.)

4. Have scores on system-wide standardized reading tests been raised, especially among students with low scores (third stanine or below)?

5. Are teachers satisfied with the way the program has been implemented, the training they have received, the response of students?

6. Are parents of children placed in the program satisfied with their progress?

D. Events to Date and Projection of Future Events (suggested dates for evaluation activity):

July-Special funding for additional staff approved by Board of Education as part of 1973-74 budget.
August-Principals report status of Orton-Gillingham in their schools and request staff needed to initiate or maintain the program. Staffing approved by Superintendent.
September-Training for aides conducted. Training for "new" teachers and refresher training for teachers trained earlier begun.
Procedures for identification of students distributed and identification begun.
Instruction organized in all schools.
October-Preliminary information gathered by evaluator about status of program at each school, names of students identified, etc.
March-Opinion survey (or interviews) of a sample of parents and staff members.
April and May-Analysis of records of progress, tests, scores, etc.
May-Written report to Associate Superintendent for Instruction.

E. Information Sources:

References (Proposals, reports of past evaluations, other documents):

Definition of "reading disability" and tentative objectives are contained in "Report of Task Force on Reading Disability," June 12, 1973

People (Individuals who may be contacted):

Goldie Quinn, Reading Specialist in the Office of Staff Development, will conduct training and consult with schools in design of their programs. Betty Dillon, Director of Staff Development, will supervise Mrs. Quinn's work. Dwight Grandgenett, Reading Consultant, is responsible for identification of goals and objectives for the comprehensive reading program and who are consulting with teachers and administrators on all aspects of the total program, including evaluation. Ron Brandt is chairman of an advisory committee composed of community people and staff members. He is responsible for success of the program and in the spring of 1974 will need to make recommendations regarding continuation or modification. Don Sherrill, Director of Special Education, is responsible for developing programs for students with severe learning disabilities.

Evaluation requested by Ron Brandt Date September 13, 1973

RB/s
9/12/73

EVALUATION OBJECTIVE

1973-74 Evaluation of ORTON-GILLINGHAM

READING DISABILITIES PROGRAM

Objectives

1. Program Implementation

1.1 By March, 1974, an Orton-Gillingham Reading Disabilities Program will be available at each attendance center in the Lincoln Public School system.

Each school must have a trained Orton-Gillingham teacher working in the prescribed manner with an appropriate group of students, i.e. students that meet the identification criteria incorporated into the program.

1.2 By March, 1974, 75% of the attendance centers implementing the Orton-Gillingham Reading Disability program will achieve a rating of at least adequate on all eight of the critical program criteria.

Each school will be rated on the eight criteria for an adequate Orton-Gillingham program. To achieve an overall rating of adequate a school must achieve a rating of adequate on all eight criteria. The school ratings will be used in conjunction with the analysis of overall student achievement in the program and as an index of district wide success in implementation. Ratings will not be reported by school. (See Appendix I)

2. Student Achievement

2.1 By March, 1974, 80% of the reading disability students in the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program will have been identified by by their Orton-Gillingham teacher as making satisfactory progress in the program.

Orton-Gillingham teachers will be asked to rate the progress individual students have made in the program. A randomly selected sample of students will be used and the ratings will be supplemented by additional information regarding the number of skills mastered. (See Appendix 2)

2.2 By May, 1974, 80% of the Reading Disability students in the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program will have made gains of 10% or greater in the skills they have received instruction on as measured by the Gallistel-Ellis Linguistic Reading and Spelling Test.

Differences between the number of items arranged correctly on the fall 1973 and the spring 1974 administration of the Gallistel-Ellis Linguistic Reading and Spelling Tests will be computed and transformed into percentages of gain or loss. The analysis will be performed on a random sample of students. Only items that assess skills each student has actually received instruction on will be included in the analysis. Analysis will be by number of items correct supplemented by number of skills mastered. (See Appendix 3)

2.3 Seventy-five percent of the reading disability students in the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program will score higher on the September 1974 administration of the standardized reading achievement test appropriate to their year in school (grade level) than was predicted based on previous scores on standardized reading achievement tests.

Linear regression techniques be used to predict a fall 1974 reading achievement score for each individual in a randomly selected sample of students. Multiple predictors (fall 1973,

fall 1972) will be used where available. The regression equation will be based on Fall 1973 reading achievement scores of students identified as learning disability students, i.e. fall 1972 and fall. 1971, will be used as predictors of fall 1973 scores. Criteria is based on the percentage of students that score higher than their predicted scores.

2.4 By May 1, 1974, fifty percent of the reading disability students in the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program will be identified by their Orton-Gillingham Reading teacher as being able to return to regular curriculum by September 1975.

Orton-Gillingham teachers will be asked in May, 1974, whether or not each individual in a randomly selected sample of students should be returned to the regular curriculum. If the response is no, they will be asked to estimate when they feel the student will be ready to be returned to the regular classroom. (See items 1 and 2, Appendix 4)

2.5 By May, 1974, classroom teachers in the Lincoln Elementary Schools in which the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program has been adequately implemented will indicate they are satisfied with the progress made in reading by 50% of the reading disability students who participated in the Orton-Gillingham Program for twenty or more weeks.

Classroom teachers of students in the randomly selected sample of students in the Orton-Gillingham program will be asked to rate each student's progress in reading. (See Appendix 5)

3. Support for the Program

3.1 By May, 1974, 80% of the classroom teachers in the Lincoln Elementary Schools in which the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program has been adequately implemented (See Objective 1.2) will rate the program as effective and support its continuation.

Classroom teachers in elementary schools in which the Orton-Gillingham program was adequately implemented will be asked to rate the program and to recommend whether or not it should be continued. (See Appendix 6)

3.2 By May, 1974, 80% of the parents of students identified as reading disability students who attend schools in which the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program has been adequately implemented and who participated in the Orton-Gillingham program for twenty or more weeks will indicate they are satisfied with the progress made by the student in reading and support continuation of the Orton-Gillingham Program.

Parents of students in the Orton-Gillingham program will be surveyed and asked to rate (1) satisfaction with their reading progress of the student (2) satisfaction with the Orton-Gillingham program and recommend whether or not the program should be continued.

Research Questions

1. What percentage of the students in the Orton-Gillingham Reading program are actually learning disability students?

A list of all participants will be compiled. Qualifying data will then be reviewed by Orton-Gillingham teachers and PSAB Consultant and participants will be classified as either (1) Learning Disability, (2) Slow Learner, and (3) Other.

2. Efficiency of the present identification procedures.

2.1 What instruments are most often used to qualify students for the program and on which are critical scores most commonly found?

Orton-Gillingham teachers will be asked to complete Student Identification Checklists for a random sample of program participants. (See Appendix 7)

2.2 What percentage of the participants do the Orton-Gillingham teacher feel their program is appropriate for?

Orton-Gillingham teachers will be asked to rate degree of appropriateness for a sample of participants. (See Appendix 7)

3. Are there significant relationships between the four indicators of progress used in the evaluation?

Each of the four indicators of progress, (1) rating of classroom teacher (2) rating of Orton-Gillingham teacher (3) scores on the Gallistel-Ellis Linguistic Reading and Spelling Test and (4) scores on Standardized reading achievement tests will be correlated with every other indicator. Scores from a random sample of students will be used.

4. In what ways do students identified as successful in the program differ from students who are not successful?

Each Orton-Gillingham teacher will be asked to identify a number of students she felt were most successful in the program and a number of students she felt were least successful in the program. Supplemental information will then be collected on the two groups (successful or non-successful). (See Appendix 6)

EJECTIVE	INSTRUMENT	SUBJECTS	RESPONDENTS	ADMINISTRATORS	DATE
1.1	Observation (App. 1)	All Schools	OG Consultant		March, 1974
1.2	Rating (App. 2)	All Schools	OG Consultant		March, 1974
2.1	Checklist (App. 2)	Sample of Students	OG Teachers		March, 1974
2.2	Gallistel-Ellis(App. 3)	All students	Students	OG Teachers	May, 1974
2.3	Standardized Test	All students	Students	Classroom Teachers	Sept., 1974
2.4	Rating Scale (App. 4)	Sample of Students	OG Teachers		March, 1974
2.5	Rating Scale (App. 5)	Sample of Students	Classroom Teachers		May, 1974
3.1	Rating Scale (App. 6)	All Classroom Teachers	Teachers		May, 1974
3.2	Parent Survey	Sample of Parents	Parents		March, 1974
		RESEARCH QUESTIONS			
1.1	Checklist	All students	OG Teachers	OG Consultant	January, 1974
2.1	Checklist (App. 7)	Sample of Students	OG Teachers		February, 1974
2.2	Rating Scale (App. 7)	Sample of Students	OG Teachers		February, 1974
3.1	Reanalysis of information collected in conjunction with objectives 2.2,2.3,2.4 and 2.5 above.				
1.1	Listing	All Students	OG Teachers		May, 1974

Appendix 3
Revised Data Collection Plan includes Orton-Gillingham Evaluation Plan.
January 9, 1974

Appendix 4
List of Appendices to
Orton-Gillingham Evaluation
Plan.
December 14, 1973

APPENDICES TO EVALUATION PLAN

Appendix 1	Implementation Criteria
Appendix 2	Student Progress in Skill Mastery to be completed by Orton-Gillingham teacher
Appendix 3	Progress Report of Coding Skills for the Gallistel-Ellis Linguistic Reading and Spelling Test
Appendix 4	Student Progress in Orton-Gillingham to be completed by Orton-Gillingham teacher
Appendix 5	Student Progress in Reading to be completed by classroom teachers
Appendix 6	Teachers Program Rating Sheet to be completed by classroom teachers
Appendix 7	Student Identification Checklist to be completed by Orton-Gillingham teacher

Appendix 5
Evaluation Report presented
to Council on Reading Disabilities
Participating Teachers, and
Council on Instruction.
September 24, 1974.

EVALUATION REPORT

of the

ORTON-GILLINGHAM READING DISABILITY PROGRAM

1973-74

submitted by

Lincoln Public Schools
Mr. John Prasch, Superintendent of Schools

and

Evaluated by

Lincoln Educational Service Unit No. 18
William T. Workman, Administrator

EVALUATION TEAM

Dr. Carl D. Novak

Dr. William Walker

Mr. Paul Monkowski

24 September 1974

EVALUATION OF THE 1973-74 ORTON-GILLINGHAM READING DISABILITY PROGRAM

The evaluation plan for the 1973-74 Orton-Gillingham Reading Disability Program was developed in cooperation with Ms. Quinn, Dr. Dillon and Dr. Brandt.

The plan was designed to answer questions of immediate concern regarding the effectiveness of the program and to provide the information necessary to insure the continued improvement of the program. It included nine evaluation objectives organized around the following three key questions.

1. Was the program successfully implemented?
2. If so, did the program effect student achievement?
3. How do certain key groups with vested interest in the program, namely parents and classroom teachers feel about the program?

In this report the nine objectives are presented in three sections: *Implementation*, which focused on question 1; *Achievement*, which focused on question 2; and *Support for the Program*, which focused on question 3. The discussion of the third section is followed by a brief summary of the findings and a list of conclusions.

Implementation

Objective 1.1 – By March, 1974, an Orton-Gillingham Reading Disability Program will be available at each attendance center in the Lincoln Public Schools system.

To achieve Objective 1.1 each school had to have a trained Orton-Gillingham teacher working in the prescribed manner with an appropriate group of students, i.e., those with special reading problems. A program was established in every school. The district-wide effort involved approximately 100 teachers working with 1,900 students at a cost of approximately $222,000. A breakdown of participants as of January, 1974 is presented in Table I. The number of participants differed greatly from school to school ranging from 16 to 106 in elementary schools, 10 to 49 in junior high schools and from 9 to 32 in senior high schools. The percent of participants to total enrollment ranged from 2.6% to 32.6% in elementary schools, 0.9% to 6.7% in junior high schools and from 0.6% to 2.0% in senior high schools. *There were, however, students with special reading problems working with trained Orton-Gillingham teachers in every school. Therefore, Objective 1.1 was achieved as stated.*

Table I

Number of Participants in the Orton-Gillingham Reading Disability Program as of January, 1974

	Number of Participants	Percent of Total Enrollment
Elementary	1,604	10.5
Junior High	213	3.0
Senior High	75	1.3

Objective 1.2 – By March, 1974, 75% of the attendance centers implementing the Orton-Gillingham Reading Disability Program will achieve a rating of at least adequate on all eight of the critical program criteria.

Eight criteria for an adequate Orton-Gillingham program were developed and used to rate the program in every school. To achieve an overall rating of adequate, a school had to achieve a rating of at least adequate on each of the eight criteria. The eight criteria are listed in Table II.

Table III summarizes the implementation ratings. Ninety-three percent of the elementary schools and 86% of the junior and senior high schools received adequate ratings on all eight criteria. Thirty-five percent of the elementary schools and 64% of the secondary schools were identified as having strong Orton-Gillingham Programs.[1] Conversely, 7% of the elementary schools and 14% of the secondary schools had weak programs.[2] *Ninety-one percent of all schools received adequate implementation ratings. Therefore, Objective 1.2 was achieved as stated.*

[1]Mean ratings of 5.0 or higher on a six-point implementation scale.
[2]Mean ratings of less than 4.0 on the six-point implementation scale.

Table II

Eight Criteria for Rating an
Orton-Gillingham Reading Disability Program

1. The program must follow the Orton-Gillingham sequence.
2. The program must make use of linguistic readers to apply skills.
3. The instruction must be appropriate to the needs of students and commensurate with their ability.
4. Instruction in the program must be reinforced in the regular classroom. (Required only of elementary schools.)
5. The program must make use of multi-sensory materials, i.e., sand trays, raised letters, etc.
6. The program must make use of the three part organization for lessons, sounds in isolation, word building, and dictation and oral reading.
7. Sight word vocabulary must be developed within the sequence.
8. Syllabication instruction must be incorporated into the sequence and must be developed with each pupil.

Table III

Number and Percent of Schools that
Received a Rating of Adequate or Higher on
All Eight of the Implementation Criteria

	Total Number of Schools	Number Receiving Adequate Ratings	Percent Receiving Adequate Ratings
Elementary	30	28	93.3
Secondary	14	12	85.7
TOTAL	44	40	90.9

Achievement

The achivement information presented in this section of the report is based on a sample of 220 reading disability students. The sample included five students from each school. The sampling procedure was designed to avoid overburdening any one teacher or school with the paperwork associated with the evaluation.

Five different criteria were used to estimate the effect of the Orton-Gillingham Program on student achievement. The criteria were: (1) judgment of Orton-Gillingham teachers; (2) judgment of classroom teachers; (3) progress on the Gallistel-Ellis Linguistic Reading and Spelling Test; (4) progress on standardized achievement tests; and (5) projected rate of return to the normal reading program.

Objective 2.1 – By March, 1974, 80% of the reading disability students in the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program will have been identified by their Orton-Gillingham teachers as making satisfactory progress in the program.

Orton-Gillingham teachers were asked to rate the progress of each of the 220 students in the Orton-Gillingham sample. The ratings are summarized in Table IV. In April, Orton-Gillingham teachers indicated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the progress of 94.2% of the students in the reading disability sample. This compares favorably with the 90.6% satisfaction rate in January. *The 94% satisfaction rate exceeded the 80% criterion. Therefore, Objective 2.1 was achieved as stated.*

Table IV

Orton-Gillingham Teacher and Classroom Teacher Ratings of Satisfaction with the Progress of Students in the Orton-Gillingham Reading Disability Sample

	Rating Period	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Orton-Gillingham Teachers	Jan.	46.8	43.8	9.4	–
Orton-Gillingham Teachers*	April	47.1	47.1	5.8	–
Classroom Teachers**	April	39.5	54.1	6.4	–

*criterion for Objective 2.1
**criterion for Objective 2.5

Objective 2.2 – By May, 1974, 80% of the reading disability students in the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program will have made gains of 10% or greater in the skills they have received instruction on as measured by the Gallistel-Ellis Linguistic Reading and Spelling Test.

The results on the Gallistel-Ellis Linguistic Reading and Spelling Test are summarized in Table V. The mean gain on the Gallistel-Ellis total test score was 50.7 raw score points or approximately 20% of the test. The results showed that 81.5% of the students made gains of 10% or more; 46.4% made gains of 20%, and 24.6% made gains of 30%. Only 2.2% of the students failed to make progress. *Since 81.5% of the students made gains of 10% or larger, Objective 2.2 was achieved as stated.*

Table V

Distribution of Student's Gains on Subtests of the Gallistel-Ellis Linguistic Reading and Spelling Tests

	Number of Items	Items Per 10% Gain	Percent of Students Making 10% Gains	20% Gains	30% Gains
Sounds	129	13	85.7	59.4	31.2
Reading	175	18	72.6	49.3	23.2
Spelling	75	8	77.4	43.4	21.0
TOTAL*	250	25	81.5	46.4	24.6

*Includes the reading and spelling subtests.

Objective 2.3 – Seventy-five percent of the reading disability students in the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program will score higher on the September, 1974 administration of the standardized reading achievement test appropriate to their year in school (grade level) than was predicted based on previous scores on standardized reading achievement tests.

Progress towards the attainment of Objective 2.3 cannot be adequately evaluated until the 1974 fall test scores become available.

Objective 2.4 – By May 1, 1974, 50% of the reading disability students in the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program will be identified by their Orton-Gillingham Reading teacher as being able to return to the regular reading curriculum by September 1, 1975.

The projected rates of return are summarized in Table VI. Twenty-two percent of the students in the reading disability sample had already been returned to the regular classroom by April when the survey was taken. The Orton-Gillingham teachers predicted that approximately 82% of the students should no longer be in the program by September, 1975. These percentages include high school students, many of whom will have graduated by September, 1975. The elementary and junior high school figures are better estimates of the expected rate of return. *Eighty percent of the elementary and junior high students have already completed the program or can be expected to complete the program by September, 1975. The criterion level was 50%, therefore, Objective 2.4 was achieved as stated.*

Table VI

Orton-Gillingham Teacher Estimates of When Students in the Reading Disability Sample will have Completed the Orton-Gillingham Program Expressed as Percentages

	By Sept. 1974	By Sept. 1975	Remain in Program	No Response
Elementary	20.0	57.3	16.7	6.0
Junior High	16.3	74.4	2.3	7.0
Senior High	60.0	40.0	–	–
TOTAL	22.1	59.6	12.5	5.8

Objective 2.5 – By May, 1974, classroom teachers in the Lincoln Elementary Schools in which the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program has been adequately implemented will indicate they are satisfied with the progress made in reading by 50% of the reading disability students who participated in the Orton-Gillingham Program for 20 or more weeks.

Classroom teachers were asked to rate the progress of the 220 students in the Orton-Gillingham sample. Each student was rated by a teacher familiar with his classroom performance. The ratings are summarized in Table IV on page 3. The classroom teachers indicated that they were very satisfied with the reading progress made by 39.5% of the students and that they were satisfied with the progress made by another 54.1%.

Since reading is traditionally an elementary school subject, the ratings of the elementary teachers are probably the most meaningful. The elementary classroom teachers indicated that they were very satisfied with the reading progress made by 40.7% of the reading disability students and were satisfied with the progress of another 52.0%. *The classroom teachers were either satisfied or very satisfied with the reading progress of 92.7% of the elementary students and 93.6% of the total sample. Therefore, Objective 2.5 was achieved as stated.*

Support for the Program

Objective 3.1 – By May, 1974, 80% of the classroom teachers in the Lincoln Elementary Schools in which the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program has been adequately implemented will rate the program as effective and support its continuation.

Ninety-four percent of the classroom teachers surveyed rated the program as either very successful or successful. The remaining 6% rated the program as only partially successful. All the teachers, including the 6% who felt the program was not totally successful, indicated that they felt the program was a useful alternative for some students and should be continued. *Therefore, since 94% of the classroom teachers surveyed felt that the program was effective and should be continued, Objective 3.1 was achieved as stated.*

Objective 3.2 – By May, 1974, 80% of the parents of students identified as reading disability students who attend schools in which the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program has been adequately implemented and who participated in the Orton-Gillingham Program for 20 or more weeks will indicate they are satisfied with the progress made by the student in reading and support continuation of the Orton-Gillingham Program.

The results of the parent survey are summarized in Table VII. *The information presented in Table VII is sufficient documentation that Objective 3.2 was achieved as stated.* Eighty-five percent of the parents were satisfied with the progress, and 98% indicated that the program should be continued. More impressive, however, was the detail of the open-ended responses of the parents. The parents reported specific areas of improvement including attitudes, achievement in other subject areas, willingness to go to school, and non-school related reading. They also provided specific information on problems and complaints. The inescapable conclusion was that parents are very aware of what the Orton-Gillingham program is and are, for the most part, very supportive of the program.

Table VII

Reactions of Parents of Students in the Reading Disability Sample to the Orton Gillingham Program

A. 98 percent of the parents reported that they were aware that their child was participating in the Orton Gillingham program.
B. 85 percent of the parents reported that they were satisfied with the progress their reading disability child had made in reading this past year.
C. 98 percent of the parents indicated that the Orton-Gillingham program should be continued.

Summary and Conclusion

The following conclusions were supported by an analysis of the program objectives.

1. The Orton-Gillingham Reading Disability Program was successfully implemented in that it was available in all attendance centers and was properly implemented in most. There were, however, schools in which the program was not satisfactorily implemented.
2. One of the aspects of the program that needs more work is the identified procedures. It is fairly obvious from the great discrepancy in percentages of identified reading disability students from school to school that successful identification depends upon the dedication and training of the staff rather than thoroughness of the specified identification procedures.
3. Both classroom teachers and special Orton-Gillingham teachers felt that the program was successful with a great majority of the reading disability students. This finding should not be automatically generalized to low ability students that participated in the program.[3]
4. The reading disability students made great gains on the Gallistell-Ellis Linguistic Test of Reading and Spelling. This finding confirms the findings of the 1972-73 and 1973-74 Title I evaluations.
5. Both classroom teachers and parents supported the Orton-Gillingham program. The parents especially indicated support for the program and seemed very well informed.
6. The most impressive findings are that 20% of the students in the program during the 1973-74 school year no longer needed it, and that more than three-fourths of the students should have been graduated from the program by September, 1975. These figures are based on teachers estimates and need to be verified. Even so, the estimated return rate was unexpectedly high.

Overall, the program appeared to be a good one. It was adequately implemented in most schools. A vast majority of Reading Disability participants (more than 90%) made satisfactory progress as rated by both classroom and Orton-Gillingham teachers. Eighty percent made adequate gains on the Gallistel-Ellis test while 25% - 50% made very large gains. The parents and classroom teachers, two groups with vested interest in the program, both indicated considerable support for the program. There are, however, still a number of problems that need to be resolved: i.e., relation of progress in program to external measures of achievement and the improvement of the identification procedures. The program does, however, seem to be working well and meeting the needs of the target students.

[3]Approximately 13% of the students were classified as low ability students.

EVALUATION OF READING DISABILITY

In June of 1973 a Task Force composed of educators and community residents recommended that the Orton-Gillingham program, which up until that time had been used mostly in Title I schools, should be extended to all schools in the district. The report, which was approved by the Board of Education, established objectives and called for a formal evaluation to be conducted.

The evaluation plan for the 1973 74 school year was developed in cooperation with Goldie Quinn, reading specialist assigned to the office of Staff Development, and Ron Brandt, Associate Superintendent for Instruction. The plan was designed to answer questions of immediate concern regarding the effectiveness of the program and to provide the information necessary to insure the continued improvement of the program. It included nine evaluation objectives organized around the following three key questions.

1. Was the program successfully implemented?
2. If so, did the program affect student achievement?
3. How do certain key groups with vested interest in the program, namely parents and classroom teachers, feel about the program?

A report analyzing data on each of the nine objectives is available separately.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions were supported by an analysis of the program objectives:

1. The Orton-Gillingham Reading Disability Program was successfully implemented in that it was available in all attendance centers and was properly implemented in most. There were, however, schools in which the program was not satisfactorily implemented.
2. One of the aspects of the program that needs more work is the identified procedures. It is fairly obvious from the great discrepancy in percentages of identified reading disability students from school to school that successful identification depends upon dedication and quality of the staff rather than thoroughness of the specified identification procedures.
3. Both classroom teachers and special Orton Gillingham teachers felt that the program was successful with a great majority of the reading disabilities students. This finding should not be automatically generalized to low ability students that participated in the program.*
4. The reading disability student made great gains on the Gallistel Ellis Linguistic Test of Reading and Spelling. This finding confirms the findings of the 1972 73 and 1973-74 Title I evaluation.
5. Both classroom teachers and parents supported the Orton Gillingham program. The parents especially indicated support for the program and seemed very well informed.
6. The most impressive findings are that 20% of the students in the program during the 1973 74 school year no longer need it, and that more than three fourths of the students should have been graduated from the program by September, 1975. These figures are based on teachers' estimates and need to be verified. Even so, the estimated return rate was unexpectedly high.

Overall, the program appeared to be a good one. It was adequately implemented in most schools. A vast majority of Reading Disability participants (more than 90%) made satisfactory progress as rated by both classroom and Orton-Gillingham teachers. Eighty per cent made adequate gains on the Gallistel-Ellis test while 25% to 50% made very large gains. The parents and classroom teachers-two groups with vested interest-both indicated considerable support for the program. There are, however, still a number of problems that need to be resolved: i.e., relation of progress in program to external measures of achievement and development of improved identification procedures. The program does, however, seem to be working well and meeting the needs of the target students.

**Approximately 13% of students were classified as low ability students.*

Nick Novak
Evaluator

Ron Brandt
Associate Superintendent for Instruction

EVALUATION OBJECTIVES
FOR
1973-74 ORTON-GILLINGHAM READING DISABILITY PROGRAM

Implementation

Objective 1.1 – By March, 1974, an Orton-Gillingham Reading Disability Program will be available at each attendance center in the Lincoln Public Schools system.

Objective 1.2 – By March, 1974, 75% of the attendance centers implementing the Orton-Gillingham Reading Disability program will achieve a rating of at least adequate on all eight of the critical program criteria.

Achievement

Objective 2.1 – By March, 1974, 80% of the reading disability students in the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program will have been identified by their Orton-Gillingham teachers as making satisfactory progress in the program.

Objective 2.2 – By May, 1974, 80% of the reading disability students in the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program will have made gains of 10% or greater in the skills they have received instruction on as measured by the Gallistel-Ellis Linguistic Reading and Spelling Test.

Objective 2.3 – Seventy-five percent of the reading disability students in the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program will score higher on the September 1974 administration of the standardized reading achievement test appropriate to their year in school (grade level) than was predicted based on previous scores on standardized reading achievement tests.

Objective 2.4 – By May 1, 1974, 50% of the reading disability students in the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program will be identified by their Orton-Gillingham Reading teacher as being able to return to the regular reading curriculum by September 1, 1975.

Objective 2.5 – By May, 1974, classroom teachers in the Lincoln Elementary Schools in which the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program has been adequately implemented will indicate they are satisfied with the progress made in reading by 50% of the reading disability students who participated in the Orton-Gillingham Program for 20 or more weeks.

Support for the Program

Objective 3.1 – By May, 1974, 80% of the classroom teachers in the Lincoln Elementary Schools in which the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program has been adequately implemented will rate the program as effective and support its continuation.

Objective 3.2 – By May, 1974, 80% of the parents of students identified as reading disability students who attend schools in which the Orton-Gillingham Reading Program has been adequately implemented and who participated in the Orton-Gillingham Program for 20 or more weeks will indicate they are satisfied with the progress made by the student in reading and support continuation of the Orton-Gillingham Program.